
[Uganda: The same old story about dams](#)

The story is not new. Dam megaprojects, presented to Southern governments and local communities as a token of prosperity and progress, bring disaster with them. The promotion of foreign investments disregarding the protection of the environment and the peoples' claims is now menacing the survival of Bujagali Falls in Uganda. The government is promoting the construction of a huge dam which, if realized, will destroy the scenic virgin beauty of the Bujagali falls, and the living space of thousands of people.

A report issued last February by the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) after a delegation of the Association visited the area confirms these fears. If the dam is constructed at Bujagali the falls, as well as the nearby islands will be submerged, and people will be deprived of their farmland where many of them obtain their livelihood. The crabs, the birds the plants and other species of trees which are peculiar to such a place will be lost for ever. With the degradation of the landscape, tourism related with rafting will also disappear.

The project will not bring any advantages from a socioeconomic point of view either. "Why build another dam when there is already one nearby at Owen Falls and yet we don't have electricity! Is there any guarantee that we will get electricity from the new dam at an affordable price? We hear that even those people who are richer than we, are finding it difficult to pay for electricity. How sure are you that we poor people will be able to pay for the electricity once a new dam is built?" said one of the local dwellers interviewed by the NEPA delegation. And another one wondered: "The Company A.E.S (Nile Independent Power) promised us jobs, but are those jobs going to be there forever? Are the jobs going to benefit our children and grand children? Are those jobs empowering us to do better or to enslave us forever and ever and ever?" Local communities are also being menaced with displacement with a mere compensation to give place to the dam.

Concerned citizens in Uganda have been trying to bring pressure to bear on the leadership in Kampala to stop this cultural and environmental disaster. Those interested in joining the "Save Bujagali" campaign, please contact Mr. Martin Musumba